

was Fumi no imiki 文忌子⁷ (his popular name was Ueda no Saburō 上田三郎).⁸ He was evil by nature and had no faith in the Three Treasures. The wife of this wicked man was a daughter of Kamitsuke no kimi Ōhashi 上毛野公大橋.⁹ She observed the eight precepts for one day and one night,¹⁰ and went to the temple to participate in the rite of repentance in the congregation. When her husband came home, he could not find her. Having asked where she was, he heard his servant¹¹ say, "She has gone for the rite of repentance." At this he became angry and immediately went to the temple to bring his wife back. The officiating monk¹² saw him and tried to enlighten him, preaching the Buddhist doctrine. However, he would not listen to the monk, saying, "None of your nonsense! You vulgar monk, you seduced my wife! Watch out or you'll get your head smashed!" His vile speech cannot be described in detail. He called his wife to go home with him, and on their return he violated her. Suddenly an ant bit his penis, and he died in acute pain.

He brought on his own death, immediate retribution, since he was so evil minded as to insult the monk unreservedly and not to refrain from wicked lust.

Even if you have a hundred tongues in your mouth and utter a thousand words, never speak ill of monks. Otherwise you will incur immediate penalties.

I2

On the Immediate Reward of Being Saved by Crabs for Saving the Lives of Crabs and a Frog¹

In Kii district, Yamashiro province 山背國紀伊郡,² there lived a woman whose name is unknown. She was born with a compassionate

7. For the Fumi family, see II.7, n. 13. The title of *imiki* was conferred on the Fumi family in 685. See *Nihon shoki*, XXIX (Tenmu 14:6:20); Aston, "Nihongi," II, 369-370.

8. The parenthesis by Kyōkai.

9. The *Shinsen shōjiroku* cites this family as being native Japanese.

10. 八齋戒 *hachi-saikai*; see I.24, n. 3.

11. 家人 *kenin*, domestic servants whose status was hereditary and who were allowed their own dwellings. They differ from slaves who could be bought and sold. *Ryō no gige*, "Ko-ryō," Articles 35, 40; Sansom, "Early Japanese Laws," Part Two, 145-147.

12. 導師 *dōshi*, Dharma Master Daie in this case.

1. See II.8, which shows the same plot of "the grateful animal" repaying a kindness. Cf. D. L. Philippi, "Ancient Tales of Supernatural Marriage," *Today's Japan*, V (No. 3, March-April, 1960), 19-23. Cf. *Hokke kenki* (III, 123), *Genkō shakusho* (XXVIII, 2), *Konjaku monogatari* (XVI, 16), *Kokon chomonshū* (XX), etc.

2. Present Kyoto-fu.

heart, and she believed in the law of karmic causation so she never took life, observing the five precepts³ and the ten virtues.⁴

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, young cowherds in her village caught eight crabs in a mountain brook and were about to roast and eat them. She saw this and begged them, "Will you please be good enough to give them to me?" They would not listen to her, but said, "We will roast and eat them." Repeating her wholehearted entreaty, she removed her robe to pay for the crabs. Eventually they gave the crabs to her. She invited a *dhyāna* master⁵ to give a blessing in releasing them.

Afterward she was in the mountain and saw a large snake swallowing a big toad. She implored the large snake, "Please set this frog free for my sake, and I will give you many offerings."⁶ The snake did not respond. Then, she collected more offerings and prayed, saying, "I will consecrate you as a kami. Please give it to me." Still without answering, the snake continued to swallow the toad. Again she pleaded, "I will become your wife in exchange for this toad. I implore you to release it to me." Raising its head high, the snake listened and stared at her face, then disgorged the toad. The woman made a promise to the snake, saying, "Come to me in seven days."

She told her parents of the whole affair in detail. They lamented, saying, "Why on earth did you, our only child, make such a promise you cannot fulfill?"

At that time the Most Venerable Gyōgi was staying at Fukasa-dera 深長寺⁷ in Kii district. She went and told him what had happened. When he heard her story, he said, "What an unfathomable story! Just keep a steadfast faith in the Three Treasures." With these instructions she went home, and, on the evening of the appointed day, she tightly closed the house, prepared herself for the ordeal, and made various vows with renewed faith in the Three Treasures. The snake came, crawled round and round the house, knocked on the walls with its tail, climbed onto the top of the roof, tore a hole in the thatch of the roof with its fangs, and dropped in front of her. She merely heard the noise of scuffling, as if there was jumping and biting. The next morning she found the eight crabs assembled and the snake cut to

3. 五戒 *gokai*; see II.8, n. 6.

4. 十善 *jūzen* (Skt. *dāśakusāla*); they are: not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, not to use immoral language, not to slander, not to equivocate, not to covet, not to give way to anger, and not to hold false views. Tradition says that the reward for observing these precepts is rebirth in one of the heavens or among men, depending on the degree of observance.

5. 義禪師 *Gi-zenji*; see I.8, n. 5.

6. 脩吊 *mitegura*; see Chap. II(1)a, n. 18.

7. Or 深草寺, unidentified.

shreds by them. She then learned that the released crabs had come to repay her kindness to them.

Even an insect which has no means of attaining enlightenment returns a favor. How can a man ever forget kindness he has received? From this time on, people in Yamashiro province have honored big crabs in the mountain streams and, if they were caught, set them free in order to do good.⁸

I3

On Lushful Love for the Image of Kichijō-tennyō Which Responded with an Extraordinary Sign¹

In a mountain temple of Chinu, Izumi district, Izumi province 和泉國泉郡血津,² there was a clay image of Kichijō-tennyō 吉祥天女.³ In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, a lay brother⁴ of Shinano province 信濃國⁵ came to live in the temple. Attracted to the female image, he felt desire, fell in love with it, and prayed six times a day,⁶ saying, "Please give me a beautiful woman like you."

Once he dreamed of lying with the female deity and the next morning discovered a stain on the skirt of the image. Seeing this, he repented, saying, "I prayed to you to give me a woman like yourself, but what a sacrifice you made to give yourself to me." He was too ashamed to tell others of the event. One disciple, however, heard about it in secret. When he was scolded and expelled from the temple because of disrespect for his teacher, he spoke ill of his teacher and revealed the whole affair. Villagers went to the temple to verify the rumor, and they discovered the stain on the statue. The lay brother could not deceive them and described in detail what had happened.

Indeed, we know that deep faith never fails to gain response. To this effect the *Nehan-gyō* 涅槃經⁷ says: "A lewd man feels desire even for a woman in a picture."

8. See Chap. II(2)a, n. 73, for the Kaniman-ji cycle and the grateful crabs.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XVII, 45).

2. See II.2, n. 3.

3. Or Kichijō-(Kishshō)-ten, a Hindu female deity adopted into the assembly of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. See Chap. II(1)a, n. 6.

4. 傳婆塞; see Chap. II(1)d, n. 91.

5. Present Nagano-ken 長野縣.

6. The twenty-four hours are divided into six units, four hours each, and a service is held in each unit; therefore, six times a day.

7. 多淫之人畫女生欲, unlocated in the *Daihatsu nehan-gyō*.

I4

On the Immediate Reward of the Destitute Princess' Devotion to the Image of Kichijō-tennyō¹

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, twenty-three members of the imperial family² agreed to give banquets and provide entertainment by turn. There was a poor princess³ among them. She had no means to give a banquet when the rest of the group had already done so. Being ashamed of her poverty, the effect of her past deeds, she went to Hatori-dō on the East Side of Nara 諸樂左京服部堂⁴ to worship the image of Kichijō-tennyō.⁵ In tears she said, "As I planted the seed of poverty in my former existence, I reap the fruit now. I went to the banquets, and, after consuming the food of others, I have no means to invite them in return. I implore you to bring me a fortune."

At that moment her child ran to her in haste and said, "A great amount of food has been sent from the former capital."⁶ She ran out and found her former wet nurse saying, "I heard you had received guests and brought you food." The food and drinks were incredibly delicious and fragrant. Nothing was missing. The metal tableware⁷ was carried by thirty men.

All the princes invited to the banquet came and were delighted. There was twice as much food as for the preceding banquets, and she was praised as a rich princess. Each one said, "If she were poor, how could she prepare such an extravagant banquet? It is better than the one I made before." The songs and dances were as extraordinary as the heavenly music.⁸ Some gave away their robes, some their skirts, and others coins, silk, cloth, cotton, etc. The princess, in her joy, gave the robes to her wet nurse to wear, but later, when she went to the temple to worship the sacred image, she found the statue wearing

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XVII, 46). A similar story is found in II.34.

2. 王宗 or 王衆.

3. 女王 *nyōō* or *ōkimi*.

4. Kichijō-tennyō-dō was in Kichijōji-machi, Nara 奈良吉祥寺町. See Fukuyama, *Narashō jin*, 304-307.

5. See Chap. II(1)d, n. 91.

6. 故京; see I.1, n. 15.

7. Rare and expensive in those days.

8. 鈞天樂 *Kinten no gaku*; the music played at the palace of Shang-ti 上帝, Supreme Lord, located in the center of heaven.